University of Alberta

Relationships Amongst Guilt-Proneness, Shame-Proneness and the Forgiveness of Others

by

Tamara Judith Dorn

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in

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Abstract

The interrelationships amongst shame-proneness, guilt-proneness, and forgiveness were previously unexplored. Recently shame and guilt have been theoretically and empirically distinguished from each other. In this study, shame was conceptualized as the negative evaluation of the self, whereas guilt was seen as involving the negative evaluation of a particular action. I hypothesized that the higher an individual's shame-proneness, the lower the tendency to forgive, whereas guilt-proneness would be unrelated to the tendency to forgive. One hundred and eighty-five participants completed the Test of Self-Conscious Affect (TOSCA), which measures shame-proneness and guilt-proneness, and the Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI). As predicted, the correlation between shame-proneness and forgiveness, and the correlation between guilt-proneness and forgiveness were significantly different. Shame-proneness had a negative correlation to forgiveness, whereas guilt-proneness was unrelated to forgiveness. When each gender was examined separately, this pattern of relationships was the same for females. Males had no significant correlation between shame-proneness and forgiveness.

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Chapter I

Introduction

This study was an investigation of the relationships amongst three experiences familiar to most people who interact with others: shame, guilt, and forgiveness. Although shame, guilt, and forgiveness are familiar words, and can quickly conjure personal memories, exact definitions are not easily generated. Each of these three concepts has generated an evolving body of research in the psychological literature, through which our understanding has been refined over the years. However, empirical research has not brought shame, guilt, and forgiveness together, so the nature of their interrelationships remains largely unexplored. This study was intended to review the current state of research regarding shame, guilt, and forgiveness, and then to answer a specific question on their interrelationships.

The relationship between guilt and shame has recently been the subject of close examination in the psychological literature, and the differences between these experiences have been illuminated. Shame has been associated, especially in recent years, with various psychological and interpersonal difficulties. Shame has typically been seen as an emotion involving negative evaluation of the whole self, whereas guilt is seen as an emotion occurring because of a negative evaluation of a particular action. In experiencing guilt the whole self is not repudiated, leaving the "good" person free to make up for their "bad" actions. In contrast, while

experiencing shame, the person is more likely to feel the need to hide. Guilt is seen as a more adaptive response to personal wrongdoing than shame.

Forgiveness is considered beneficial. The forgiveness of people who have been hurtful is seen as a goal to be worked towards, personally or with the help of therapy. To be able to forgive involves recognizing the impact of an offense, but overcoming the negative response to the offender despite the fact there is no obligation to do so (Subkoviak et al., 1995). Beyond being lauded as a morally admirable action, forgiveness is credited with positive psychological effects including promoting personal healing and freeing up mental energy. Thus, understanding forgiveness and its relationship to other personal characteristics is a valuable pursuit for the area of counselling psychology.

Guilt and shame are both emotions that are involved with personal wrongdoing or failure, while forgiveness has to do with how we deal with the impact of others' wrongdoing or failure. I believe that there is a link between how we perceive and treat ourselves, and how we perceive and treat others--connecting guilt and shame to forgiveness. I speculate that shame, guilt, and forgiveness are closely intertwined, involving and influencing a person's pattern of relationships with others.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between shame-proneness and the tendency to forgive, and guilt-proneness and the

tendency to forgive. I wanted to determine whether individuals' proneness to shame makes it less likely that they would forgive someone who has hurt them. I also compared this relationship between shame-proneness and forgiveness with the relationship between guilt-proneness and forgiveness--where, based on the literature, I expected no relationship. The intent of this study was to extend research on the differences between shame and guilt, as well as to lend insight into the challenges of including forgiveness as a process to be explored in therapy. To date, research in this area has indicated that shame and guilt, while similar, are distinguishable in the way they are experienced, and in their relationship to the sense of self.

Organization of the Report

In Chapter II, I examine literature on the nature of guilt, shame, and forgiveness, and I provide a rationale for examining the relationships between these experiences. Research hypotheses that follow from this examination are stated. In Chapter III, I provide an explanation of the research design and methods to be used in this study. In Chapter IV, I give a summary of the results; and in Chapter V, I evaluate and interpret the results, discussing the implications and limitations of my research.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

This section provides a review of the literature, creating a setting for the hypothesis of this study. First, a discussion of the study of emotion is presented, placing my study in its historical context. Then the three central constructs of my study--shame, guilt, and forgiveness--are defined, with an exploration of theoretical approaches to each. Current empirical research on these topics is also examined. Finally, research and theory that bring the three areas together is highlighted, providing a rationale for the particular focus of the current exploration.

The Study of Emotion

Acceptance of emotions, such as guilt and shame, as legitimate and approachable topics of research has been recent. As Fischer and Tangney (1995) note, although Freud and Erikson believed that shame and guilt play central roles in development and pathology, historically the study of these emotions was neglected. As early as 1913, Watson, reacting to introspective approaches, was calling for psychologists to reject the study of emotions and other internal experiences such as mental images (Leahey, 1992). Observable behavior was to be the sole legitimate subject of inquiry. Recent years have seen the acceptance and development of the study of cognition. Most recently, Fischer and Tangney speak of an "affect revolution", where emotion is no longer considered merely an epiphenomenon of behaviour and

cognition. Their recent book, a compilation of theory and research on "self-conscious emotions" such as guilt, shame, embarrassment, and pride, as well as the increasing numbers of published articles (e.g. Baumeister, Stillwell & Heatherton, 1994; Broucek, 1991; Halling, 1994), are signs of the healthy development in this field of study.

Emotions can be studied either as state or trait characteristics. Studying an emotional state requires the induction of that state, or self-reports of how the individual is feeling at the moment. Studying an emotional trait requires either retrospection or long-term observation of how the individual typically functions. When emotions are studied as trait characteristics, this falls in the domain of personality study. There has been a trend to develop a basic taxonomy of personality traits, as seen in the emergence of the "Big Five" factors (Goldberg, 1993). Factors such as Factor II (Agreeableness) and Factor IV (Emotional Stability vs. Neuroticism) are broad categories under which varieties of emotional tendencies might lie. For example, Factor II encompasses the trait of hostility, which is the tendency towards anger, and Factor IV encompasses the trait of nervousness, which is the tendency toward anxiety. Concurrent with the reduction to broad factors, there has been a continued expansion in the exploration of the diversity of human characteristics and experiences, especially in the work of phenomonologists.

Some of the recent examination of emotion is phenomenological--exploring the nature of individuals' experience of emotion. Other research is biological--looking at facial muscles and brain changes and their relation to "basic" emotions (Izard & Malatesta, 1987; Levinson, Ekman & Friesen, 1990; Nathanson, 1994). Finally, some research is based on self-report measures. These are often developed out of phenomenological work, and validated by their patterns of correlations with established measures of personality and psychopathology (Harder, 1995; Tangney, Burggraf & Wagner, 1995). My study employed the third method, self-report questionnaires to measure the traits of shame-proneness and guilt-proneness.

Shame

Shame is a common experience. We are all familiar with the word, and with this unpleasant, even painful, emotion. Shame is so common an experience that those without shame are considered unusual or not fully developed. Shamelessness is often considered to be characteristic of the marginal in society--young children, reckless youth, the mentally ill, and psychopaths.

Despite the ubiquity of shame, the concept has not been a topic of psychological discussions or inquiry until recent years. Now, as one author has suggested, it is regarded by many as "the preeminent cause of emotional distress in our time" (Karen, 1992, p. 40). Although shame may be common

and even essential in normal development, it is also currently blamed for many psychological difficulties when it occurs in excess.

What is shame? In psychoanalytic thought, shame is traditionally seen as an intrapersonal (as opposed to interpersonal) process, occurring because of conflicts internal to the person. There are several versions of exactly which internal processes are involved. Typically, shame is seen as occurring when there is gap between how people want to view themselves and how they currently perceive themselves. This gap has been described as falling short of the ego-ideal (Piers & Singer, 1971), or as a tension between the self and the ideal self (Morrison, 1983). Not living up to your own image of what you want to be results in anxiety about imagined abandonment (Piers & Singer), or anxiety about imagined rejection in the form of criticism, ridicule, and scorn (Levin, 1967). Because individuals fail in attaining their own standards, they expect others to react to them the way they are reacting to themselves. This accounts for the familiar feeling of shame, the cringing and wanting to hide, to avoid the ridicule or abandonment that seems inevitable.

Another psychoanalytic perspective is that of Erikson (1950). He included overcoming shame as one of the early tasks in child development, including it as the negative pole of one of his eight stages. Shame and self-doubt can become a problem if autonomy is not achieved at the second (anal) stage of ego development. This stage occurs, according to Erikson, as the child develops self-consciousness and a sense of being looked at or exposed.

Kaufman critiqued Erikson's discussion of shame by noting that "the negative pole of each crisis is actually an elaboration of shame, given new or wider meaning" (1989, p. 10). In Kaufman's opinion, inferiority, isolation, stagnation, and the other difficulties are all forms of shame.

A different psychoanalytic formulation was offered by Helen Block Lewis (1971), who also included the role of the superego. Through extensive reviews of transcripts of analytic sessions, she found shame present, yet unaddressed, in many therapy interactions. She described shame as the punishment meted out by the superego when the concept of the self cannot be sustained by the evaluation of others. Thus her formulation has more of an interpersonal perspective instead of strictly intrapsychic--she saw shame as a mechanism that fosters social behavior.

There are non-psychoanalytic perspectives on shame as well. Some current researchers such as Kaufman (1989) and Nathanson (1993) have utilized the affect theory of Silvan Tomkins to understand shame. Tomkins classified shame as one of nine innate affects. He contended that these affects are present at birth as biological givens, and correspond to universally experienced sets of physiological changes. Once these clusters of physiological changes, or affects, come to be associated with a variety of experiences and triggers in memory, affective experiences achieve patterns of meaning and significance unique to each individual. This assembly of basic affect with experience is what Tomkins called emotion.

Looking at shame in particular, Tomkin's affect theory states that shame initially comes about because it is a naturally occurring response to an impediment to positive affect (Nathanson, 1994). The physiological response of shame includes blushing, averted gaze, slumping, and an inability to think clearly. Nathanson goes on to provide a list of the sorts of situations that come to be associated with the shame affect. He then describes how shame involves a rapid scan of all previous similar moments.

As Broucek (1991) points out, this formulation of shame may be too simple. An impediment to a positive affect may occur in many situations without being associated with shame. Further, Tangney (1996) argues that one cannot specify situations in which people feel shame. She suggests that shame or guilt occurs depending on what a person brings to any given situation. She states that theoretical and empirical work challenges the premise behind constructing lists of shame-inducing situations. I used Tangney's conception of shame, which builds on H. B. Lewis's work. It will be described in more detail later in my literature review.

The consequences of shame. Nathanson (1994) posits a "compass of shame" (p. 553), which includes four responses used to defend against this unpleasant emotion: withdrawal, avoidance, self-attack, and the attack of others. A person may defend against shame by withdrawal, ranging from a slight gesture or significant interpersonal retreat. A second response is avoidance, through drug use or through a narcissistic emphasis on only things

that bring us pride. The final two responses are to attack one's self, which results in a deferential approach to others in an attempt to maintain contact with them, or to attack others, which leads to abuse of others in attempt to maintain the balance of power with them.

A study by Tangney, Wagner, Fletcher and Gramzow (1992) supports Nathanson's contention that one consequence of shame is attacking others. The authors found that individuals who are more shame-prone are also likely to be prone to anger arousal, suspiciousness, resentment, irritability, a tendency to blame others for negative events, and indirect expressions of hostility.

Nathanson suggests that borderline personality disorder may be a disorder based on problems with shame, in the same way that there may be other disorders based on other basic affects (1994). He explains each of the DSM-IV criteria for borderline personality disorder in terms of its basis in shame. The identity disturbances, impulsivity, suicidal behaviors, and other characteristics of these individuals can all be seen as the destructive results of shame on the self. Nathanson suggests that appropriate treatment of this disorder must include a recognition of the centrality of shame, and a compassionate treatment that does not involve further humiliation.

Guilt

The distinction between guilt and shame is an important one, but these emotions are often confused. Lindsay-Hartz (1984) found that even verbal,

well-educated adults have difficulty defining and distinguishing between shame and guilt. It seems that psychological researchers have faced the same difficulty.

What is guilt? Brooke (1985) performed a phenomenological study of the nature of guilt. He had individuals write detailed descriptions of situations in which they felt guilty. These descriptions were broken into units and then analyzed and synthesized into a description of the general structure of the experience of the participants. Brooke found that guilt occurs in the context of damaged world-relationships that an individual values. A person feels responsible or indebted for the damage caused, and feels isolated by this indebtedness. The guilt is resolved as the individual is brought back into harmonious and trusting relationships with others. A problem with Brooke's analysis is that he did not explore the difference between shame and guilt, or explain how he had his participants differentiate these experiences.

Lindsay-Hartz (1984) had adults provide descriptions of situations where they felt shame and situations where they felt guilt. Her comprehensive analysis of these descriptions pointed to distinct differences in the two types of experiences. The participants typically described shame as involving a desire to hide, and guilt as involving a desire to confess. The author found this difference was even reflected in participants' willingness to talk about their experiences--they seemed much more willing to talk about

guilty experiences but showed reluctance to talk about shameful ones. Guilt experiences also involved a desire to set things right. Regarding effects on identity, Lindsay-Hartz found that shame involved experiencing ourselves as being small, worthless, and exposed, but guilt involved experiencing ourselves "as if we are bad, and there is a tension in our experience of ourselves and our relationships to others" (p. 696). Along with emphasizing the "as if" quality of guilt, Lindsay-Hartz suggests guilt does not have the same profoundly negative transforming power that shame does.

One area of interest for my study was Lindsay-Hartz's (1984) analysis of the function of guilt. She found that one function of guilt was "to support the value of reconciling with others and being forgiven" (p. 702). She found participants pointed to guilt as leading them to ask for forgiveness, and as involving a longing for reconciliation. Whereas shame leads us away from others, guilt may push us to repair broken relationships.

Baumeister, Stillwell, and Heatherton (1994) also support the view that guilt is an important interpersonal phenomenon. They conducted a major review of the research on guilt and concluded that an interpersonal, social perspective on guilt is necessary. Traditional intrapsychic perspectives were found to be insufficient by themselves. They found that guilt motivates relationship-enhancing behaviors, is used interpersonally to get one's way, and enhances a redistribution of emotional distress among participants in

relationships. Guilt also was found to promote pro-social actions such as making reparations, apologizing, and confessing misdeeds.

Psychometric perspectives. Current researchers are divided about the nature of guilt, as differentiated from shame. Guilt is considered to be a part of a family of "self-conscious emotions", along with embarrassment, pride, and shame (Fischer & Tangney, 1995). Shame is the closest relative to guilt, which may be one reason why it has been difficult to differentiate between them. For instance, Mosher (1979) created a scale that was used widely in the past to study guilt. It is now considered to measure shame, because its items are more reflective of phenomenological studies of shame than guilt.

Tangney and her colleagues (Tangney, Wagner & Gramzow, 1989) have developed the Test of Self-Conscious Affect (TOSCA), a measure of shame-proneness and guilt-proneness. This test attempts to assess the typical responses of individuals to hypothetical situations that have the potential to induce both guilt and shame responses, such as forgetting a lunch date with a friend. A shame response to such a situation could be feeling disgusted with yourself, and a guilt response could be making sure you apologized. For each scenario, participants indicate how likely they would be to have these shame and guilt responses. The test provides scores for the traits of guilt-proneness and shame-proneness.

In creating this test, Tangney worked from a conceptualization of guilt that was congruent with the observations of H. B. Lewis and with the findings of phenomenological studies. She saw both guilt and shame as negative affective experiences, involving "self-relevant negative evaluation". Her distinction between guilt and shame involved contrasting cognitive attributions, feelings, and resultant behaviors. The self-evaluation in guilt is in regards to specific behaviors, whereas in shame, it is focused on the entire self. The guilty person says "I did a bad thing", while the shame-filled person says "I am a bad person". This results in different responses to the incident. The guilty person is likely to feel tension, remorse, regret, and to feel a press to confess, apologize, or make amends for their behavior. As Tangney (1990) said, the self remains mobilized to take reparative action. The shame-filled person, in contrast, is likely to feel small, worthless, and want to shrink or hide. Shame can result in hostility or defensive anger. Because the <u>self</u> is the object of negative evaluation, the person is not likely to feel free to take reparative action, but is more likely to want to avoid exposure.

Harder's conceptions of guilt and shame were different. He distinguished guilt and shame based on the "primary locus of self-evaluation" (1995, p. 313). Guilt is felt when one's own internal standards are violated, whereas shame is felt when an "other" is evaluating. He created a scale based on these ideas. It presents a variety of shame-related and guilt-

related affective descriptors (e.g. for shame, "embarrassment"; for guilt, "regret, remorse") and asks participants to rate the frequency with which they feel them.

He expected much overlap between the two emotions, but still maintained that they are distinguishable. However, he reported that the scales he developed to measure them show some difficulty in discrimination (p. 374). He tested the validity of both his measure and Tangney's by looking at a series of hypotheses regarding construct validity. He found that Tangney's TOSCA performed well in matching the pattern of hypothesized correlations amongst shame, guilt and various personality measures, except in two key areas. Harder hypothesized that depression and self-derogation would be related to guilt. The TOSCA showed near-zero relationships with these measures. Harder argued that this result does not augur well for Tangney's scale, because clinically, guilt is seen to play an important part in psychopathology. The DSM-IV includes "excessive guilt" as one feature of depression.

Tangney (Tangney, Burggraf & Wagner, 1995) countered Harder's arguments by pointing out that shame and guilt are not clearly delineated in most clinical writing. She suggested that her measure does in fact fit well with her and others' understanding of guilt when it is carefully distinguished from shame. Her measure of shame correlated with numerous measures of psychopathology, while her measure of guilt showed negligible relationships to

the same measures (Tangney, Wagner & Gramzow, 1992). As mentioned previously, this was also the case for angry tendencies (Tangney, Wagner, Fletcher & Gramzow, 1992). Guilt, she suggests, has consistent positive correlations with constructs we construe as healthy and beneficial to relationships, such as empathy (Tangney, 1991). She hypothesizes that guilt becomes pathological only when it is fused with shame. A person may feel frequent or excessive guilt when shame is also present, eroding the self. Thus shame and guilt are treated as separate, but related constructs. A person may be shame-prone, guilt-prone, shame- and guilt-prone, or prone to neither.

Forgiveness

Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1996) identify a forgiveness "triad": forgiving others, forgiving the self, and receiving forgiveness. Typically, the study of forgiveness has focused on forgiving others, but these authors argue that the other two aspects of forgiveness are equally important areas of study. They suggest the processes of receiving forgiveness and forgiving the self interrelate with forgiving others because of the complex and interpersonal nature of forgiveness. They point out that greater clarity in therapists' understanding of forgiveness might result from awareness of all three aspects of forgiveness.

The measurement of forgiveness often focuses on forgiveness of others (e.g. Subkoviak et al., 1995; Wade, 1989). No measures have been developed

that assess all three aspects described by Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1996). However, Mauger et al. (1992) have developed scales to measure forgiveness of others and forgiveness of self. They describe the items relating to forgiveness of others as extropunitive (regarding the need to punish others) and the items relating to forgiveness of self as intropunitive (regarding the need to punish the self). An examination of the forgiveness of self items reveals that many of these items are about shame and guilt, even mentioning these terms.

The idea of self-forgiveness might be another way of looking at the same phenomena involved with shame or guilt. It could be that self-forgiveness and shame are names for opposite ends of the same continuum. Shame might be a state of not forgiving the self. Another possibility is that self-forgiveness is an essential step in moving beyond shame. Halling, in an article entitled "Shame and Forgiveness" (1994), provided an analysis of fiction which suggests self-forgiveness is the key to moving beyond the shame and self-loathing brought on by racism. Because of the possible confusion of shame, guilt, and self-forgiveness, this study will focus on the forgiveness of others, which appears to be more conceptually distinct.

What is forgiveness? Hope (1987) presented a number of theoretical perspectives on forgiveness. He suggested that forgiveness involves a cognitive restructuring of a person's perceptual set toward the past and a reframing how one views the world, which result in inattention to old hurts.

Forgiveness can also be seen from a psychodynamic perspective. Forgiveness allows past emotion-laden conflicts to be let go of, which prevents them from being cathected with energy, thus freeing more psychic energy for adaptive functioning.

The process of forgiveness has been extensively documented by Enright, Gassin, and Wu (1992). They discuss a variety of philosophical and psychological writings in drawing their conclusions. Most informative is a section on what forgiveness is not. They conclude that forgiveness is not forgetting. Nor is it reconciliation with the offender, because reconciliation involves two people, while forgiveness involves only one. Forgiveness does not involve condoning the action of the offender, or indifference towards wrongdoing. Instead, they suggest forgiveness involves a sometimes painful process of facing the pain of an injury, deciding to cope with it differently, overcoming natural responses such as resentment, taking time to accrue a new response to the situation, and finally absorbing the pain and gaining an empathetic response toward the offender that involves realizing that one also needs forgiveness sometimes.

There has been some empirical research on forgiveness. For instance, DiBlasio and Benda (1991) studied the use of forgiveness as a therapy technique amongst clinicians, and found that older therapists had more favorable attitudes towards forgiveness than younger ones. McCullough and Worthington (1995) compared the effectiveness of two types of

psychoeducational groups promoting forgiveness with a waiting-list control. They found that both treatment groups had positive effects, including decreased feelings of revenge, increased positive feelings towards the offender, and more conciliatory behavior. Phillips and Osborne (1989) reported on the utility of forgiveness in working with cancer patients. Working from a phenomenological perspective, the researchers found forgiveness therapy to be beneficial, enhancing the well-being and peacefulness of the cancer patients. Walker (1993), using one of the same questionnaires as in my study (the EFI), found a strong positive relationship between forgiveness and marital adjustment. These studies are suggestive of the beneficial nature of forgiveness, and of the fact that forgiveness is amenable to research.

Shame, Guilt, and Forgiveness

The clearest discussion of the interrelationships among shame, guilt and forgiveness is in an article by Sebern Fisher (1985) about the treatment of people with borderline personality disorder. In this clinical and theoretical paper, he suggested that shame is the key factor in the development of borderline personality disorder. With this disorder, shame and inferiority feelings are often seen, while there may be "a conspicuous absence of true guilt" (p. 1). Borderline people typically see others as either all bad or all good, and have limited ability to separate an action from a person as a whole. Fisher said shame-based people often feel they are unforgivable, and

do not see forgiveness as a possibility because they do not recognize that "bad acts do not mean a bad person" (p. 6). Fisher reported that the borderline patients he has worked with are not able to identify any processes for forgiveness in their families, or remember times when they were forgiven. He found that teaching forgiveness to these patients was difficult, because of the need to work past the shame-oriented perspective these patients have. Like Nathanson (1994), Fisher emphasized the importance of recognizing shame as an issue, and the importance of not exacerbating it when frustrated with clients.

Synthesis of the Literature

Theoretically, there seems to be an understanding that shame and forgiveness do not easily co-exist, but that guilt and forgiveness are more compatible. Borderline personality disorder may be an extreme example of how shame-proneness makes forgiveness difficult. One would expect that the more shame a person experiences, the more difficult forgiveness becomes. Not all people will experience shame with the intensity of those with borderline personality disorder, but previous research shows that a whole range of shame-proneness exists.

In contrast, because guilt involves a separation of deed from person, a guilt-prone perspective allows for forgiveness of an offending person. It seems likely that being guilt-prone would not prevent forgiveness. A person with a highly developed sense of guilt, with little interfering shame, would be

likely to make accurate assessments of their interpersonal obligations and failures. This person would likely find active ways to make reparation for errors. Even when experiencing undischarged guilt, this person would likely be more free emotionally to forgive others, to separate out their actions from their worth as a person, to absorb the pain of the situation and respond empathetically. A person with a less highly developed sense of guilt would likely be just as free to forgive others. Thus guilt-proneness may have little to do with one's ability to forgive.

From the theoretical understanding I developed from the literature, I hypothesized that the higher an individual's shame-proneness, the lower the tendency to forgive, whereas I expected that guilt-proneness would be unrelated to the tendency to forgive.

Chapter III

Methods

Participants

Participants were obtained from undergraduate psychology classes, and were free to volunteer their participation as a part of their course credit. The use of students as participants has advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantage is the reduction of generalizability to adults in the general public. The population from which the students come is younger and involved in post-secondary education, and thus may have significantly different characteristics than the general public. The advantage is the availability of the participants given the time constraints of a masters thesis, and the ability to provide a motivating reward for participation that does not involve additional expenditure. In addition, comparison of findings is enhanced because of the fact that much of the current literature is based on the study of college students.

Basic demographic information was gathered using a brief form constructed by the author (see Appendix A). Information included age, gender, and education level. These variables were chosen because of they are frequently encountered in the literature on guilt, shame, and forgiveness (Subkoviak et al., 1995; Tangney, 1990).

The study involved 189 undergraduate participants. The final data set included 185 participants' data--four were excluded for incomplete data (they

left one or more pages of the questionnaire package blank). The analyses that follow in the results section are all based on data provided by the 185 students who completed the questionnaire.

The most typical participants were young, female, first year students. Women made up 73.5% of the set, whereas men accounted for 26.5%. This is typical of the gender balance in introductory psychology classes. Ages ranged ages from 16 to 34 years, with a mean age of 19.0 years, and a modal age of 18. The majority of participants were in their first year of university (59%); students in their second year accounted for 25%; and students in their third year or beyond accounted for the remaining 16%.

Instrumentation

All participants were given identical packets containing a three-part questionnaire. The questionnaire included the demographic questions mentioned above, the TOSCA, and the Forgiveness Questionnaire. These instruments and their characteristics are described below.

TOSCA. The Test of Self Conscious Affect, or TOSCA (see Appendix B), is designed to assess the characteristic responses of individuals to common positive and negative situations (Tangney, Wagner, & Gramzow, 1989). It looks at shame- and guilt-proneness as dispositional characteristics or traits, not at the present experience of guilt or shame. It assesses tendencies towards affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses that are

associated with shame, guilt, externalizing of blame, detachment or unconcern, and pride.

It consists of a series of 15 brief scenarios and associated responses, which were drawn from a large pool of written accounts of shame, guilt and pride experiences. On a five point scale, participants rate the likelihood of responding in each of the manners indicated. Thus, shame and guilt responses are both possible for each scenario. Indices of shame-proneness and guilt-proneness are created by summing the relevant responses across scenarios.

The TOSCA has several features to recommend it above other measures of guilt and shame. It does not require a sophisticated vocabulary, unlike some adjective checklists where a knowledge of subtle differences in word meanings is required. As well, by providing concrete situations and reactions, it does not require respondents to consider constructs in the abstract. For example, participants are asked to consider a situation where they made plans to meet a friend for lunch but forgot about it. Four responses are given which are phenomenological descriptions of different reactions to the situation. Participants are asked to rate the likelihood of each response. One is a shame response (e.g. "You would think: I'm inconsiderate"); one is a guilt response (e.g. "You would try to make it up to him as soon as possible); one is an externalizing response which lays blame elsewhere (e.g. "You would think: My boss distracted me just before lunch"); and one is a detachment response which minimizes the problem (e.g. "You would think:

Well, they'll understand"). The externalizing and detachment responses were administered to participants, but not examined in this study.

A further benefit of the TOSCA is that it clearly delineates shame and guilt in a theoretically consistent manner. It does not assume certain situations are shame-inducing or guilt-inducing, but rather allows for a variety of responses to a given situation. Finally, the situations and responses provided were generated by a subject population, not the researchers, and were chosen because of the frequency of their occurrence in accounts of shame and guilt and the likelihood that they were not idiosyncratic experiences.

The TOSCA has been used in several studies, and shows good psychometric properties. The test-retest reliability over a three to five week period was .85 for shame and .75 for guilt for a sample of undergraduates. Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used to test internal consistency, which was adequate at .74 for shame and .69 for guilt with a sample of college students, and .74 for shame and .61 for guilt with adults (Tangney, 1996).

Supportive of the construct validity of the TOSCA was a study by Tangney, Wagner and Gramzow (1992), using the TOSCA and the Symptom Checklist 90 - Revised (Derogatis, 1983), and other common measure of psychological symptomatology. Proneness to shame was shown to be positively correlated with a broad range of symptoms indicative of depression, anxiety, somatization, obsessive compulsiveness, paranoid ideation and

psychoticism. In contrast, proneness to guilt was generally unrelated, or sometimes negatively related to psychological maladjustment. Other studies have shown a relationship between shame and destructive responses to anger (Tangney, Wagner, Hill-Barlow & Marschall, 1996), and between shame and eating disorder symptomatology (Sanftner, Barlow, Marschall, & Tangney, 1995).

The TOSCA shame and guilt scales have been shown to correlate .45 (Tangney, Burggraf & Wagner, 1995). This probably is because shame and guilt share some features and because they can co-occur in a given situation. In researching differences between shame and guilt, often what is of interest is the unique variance of each--that is, what each construct separately contributes. Tangney and her colleagues solve this problem by partialling shame out of guilt and vice versa, leaving residuals which are a measure of "shame-free guilt" and "guilt-free shame". They then correlate these new variables with a third variable of interest. This method seemed to enhance the already-present contrasts between the two scales and their correlations to other variables.

Enright Forgiveness Inventory. The Enright Forgiveness Inventory, or EFI, is designed to assess the degree of forgiveness experienced by individuals towards an offender who has hurt them deeply and unfairly (Subkoviak, Enright, & Wu, 1992). Respondents are asked to think of the most recent instance of someone hurting them unfairly and deeply.

Respondents answer a few questions about the nature and time of the incident, then answer 150 items about their feelings, behaviors, and thoughts towards the offender. For example, they are asked how warm, hostile, and bitter they feel to the offender; if they ignore, help, or put down the offender; and how worthless, dreadful, or good they think the offender is. The 150 items can be divided into six subscales: absence of negative affect (NA), presence of positive affect (PA), absence of negative cognition (NC), presence of positive cognition (PC), absence of negative behavior (NB), and presence of positive behavior (PB). The items can also be used to generate an overall forgiveness score.

Items were generated by a panel of faculty and graduate students familiar with the psychology and philosophy of forgiveness (Subkoviak, Enright, & Wu, 1992). Eight additional items assess "pseudo-forgiveness", which is understood as a false forgiveness based on the denial of the impact and hurt of an offense. A score of 20 or higher on pseudo-forgiveness is considered to invalidate the measure, and participants with invalidated questionnaires are typically dropped from the sample (Subkoviak et al., 1995).

According to the authors, the EFI is still in development (Subkoviak et al., 1995), but its psychometric properties are strong at this time. Its test-retest reliability over a four-week period was .86 for the overall score, and the reliability of the subscales ranged from .67 to .91. Cronbach's coefficient alpha showed that the internal consistency was very strong, at .98

for the overall score, and ranging from .93 to .97 for the subscales (Subkoviak, Enright, & Wu, 1992). The validity of summing the items to provide a full-scale EFI score was shown by a factor analysis that indicated one strong factor, an overall "forgiveness factor". The measure also showed a near zero correlation with the Crowne-Marlowe Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960), which suggests that the measure is not influenced by participants' desire to look socially appropriate in the way that they respond to the questions.

The EFI is not included in the appendices at the request of its author, to protect its copyright.

Procedure

The package of questionnaires was administered to four groups of approximately 50 undergraduate psychology students each. This occurred over two days, September 25 and 26, 1997. The students signed up for the project over the course of two weeks before the session dates. The four sessions were each approximately one hour in length, and occurred in a standardized fashion in one classroom in the Biological Sciences building at the University of Alberta.

Ethical approval was obtained from both the Educational Psychology and Psychology departments. The nature of the research was described as fully as possible, including nature of the tasks required, length of time involved, and eventual use of the data (see Appendix C). Informed consent

was obtained, utilizing a form that outlines the nature and purpose of the research, and the rights of the participant to withdraw at any time without penalty (see Appendix D). Participants were reassured verbally of the completely voluntary nature of their involvement, and the freedom they had to stop participation without any repercussions to them. The fact that no individual or personal data would be divulged in the written report was stated. Steps to ensure anonymity, such as coding of questionnaires, were explained. Confidentiality of all written responses was ensured by not allowing anyone but myself to view the responses. A debriefing after participation occurred, with full disclosure of the nature of the study (see Appendix E). If participants wished to withdraw their data at that time, or at any future date, they were informed that they were free to do so. None did so. Participants were made aware that if any discomfort occurred to them as a result of their participation, they were free to contact the researcher, and, if necessary, referrals to appropriate helping agencies would be made. A summary of the results of the study was offered to those who wanted one mailed to them.

Chapter IV

Results

This chapter presents the results of the study. First I present findings regarding the measures I used. I then present a check I performed to see if there were gender differences that prohibited pooling the data for both genders. Results for the sample as a whole are presented first, followed by results for each gender.

Findings Regarding the Measures

I generated a range, mean, and standard deviation for each measure I used to check if my participants were comparable to those described in previous studies or if anomalies occurred with my data. In this section I also report on the types of incidents the participants provided for the forgiveness inventory.

Shame. Participants scored between 26 and 69 (out of a possible score of 15 to 75) on the shame scale of the TOSCA. The mean for shame was 45.5, and the standard deviation was 8.2. This mean and standard deviation are comparable to normative data gathered from American college students.

Guilt. Participants scored between 34 and 72 (out of a possible score of 15 to 75) on the guilt scale of the TOSCA. The mean for guilt was 59.5, and the standard deviation was 6.8. Again, this mean and standard deviation are comparable to normative data gathered from American college students.

The correlation between shame and guilt was r (184)= .48, $p < .001$. This correlation is similar to those found in previous studies utilizing the TOSCA (Tangney, Wagner, Fletcher, & Gramzow, 1992).

Forgiveness. Participants scored between 10 and 300 (out of a possible score of 0 to 300) on the EFI, showing a full range of responses from extreme unforgiveness to total forgiveness. The mean for forgiveness was 195.4, and the standard deviation was 76.38. This mean, when transformed to the format used by Subkoviak, Enright, and Wu (1992; 1995), falls around the 45th percentile on their table of norms, which was created using a sample of American college students and their parents. This indicates that the current participants likely responded to the questionnaire in a similar manner.

No participants were excluded using the "pseudo-forgiveness" validity check. This five-item scale screens for individuals who claim they have forgiven an offender, but deny the hurtfulness of the offense. The authors theorize that denying that the event was hurtful means either the participant did not need to forgive it (hence the forgiveness responses are about a non-event), or that the person is avoiding forgiving it by minimizing the incident (thus any forgiveness they indicate would not be true forgiveness). The other check of validity was a one item question asking to what extent participants have "forgiven" the person they rated. It is the only question that mentions forgiveness in the EFI. For my study, this validity item had a

significant correlation with the overall score on the EFI (r (184) = .81, p < .001), indicating that the EFI is likely a valid indicator of forgiveness.

The participants were asked to choose one recent incident where they had been hurt unfairly and deeply, and all questions on the EFI related to this incident. Participants provided some descriptive information about the incidents they chose. First, they answered a question regarding how much hurt they experienced. Incidents that hurt "a great deal" accounted for 30%, and incidents that hurt "much" accounted for 47%, which meant that these two higher end categories of hurt were chosen by a total of 76% of the participants. Thus most people reported on incidents that were likely significant and impactful to them. This is not surprising given the anonymous conditions and the instructions to focus on a time that was deeply hurtful. The remaining participants reported "some" (17%) or "a little" (7%) hurt.

A variety of situations were chosen by the participants. When asked who was involved in the incident, friends of the same gender were most common (30%), followed by friends of the opposite gender (27%) and relatives (22%). Less common were spouses (3%) and employers (1%). "Other" people accounted for 17%, and children accounted for none of the incidents. Participants chose individuals who were still living 97% of the time. This profile of the events reported seems to be congruent with the age range of the participants, who would typically be unmarried, childless, and in their early years in university. The types of events reported are similar to those

found by Subkoviak, Enright, and Wu (1992) in their study of the validity of the EFI. They describe the typical events reported by their sample, such as difficulties with male-female relationships, as "developmentally appropriate" (p. 8). My sample included many descriptions of friendships that were broken by breaches of trust or rejection, and dating relationships that were ended by disappointments or cheating.

The Influence of Gender

I checked to see if the data for male and female participants were similar. I did this to see if I could pool the data for male and female participants, treating them as one population. The means, standard deviations, and ranges for shame-proneness, guilt-proneness and forgiveness are summarized in Table 1.

I performed t-tests on the means for shame, guilt, and forgiveness, comparing males and females. For the sample in my study, males reported significantly less shame and guilt than females. The two genders reported similar levels of forgiveness. The t-test for differences in mean shame was significant (t (47) = 3.0, $p < .01$, two-tailed), as was the t-test for differences in mean guilt (t (134) = 4.9, $p < .000$, two-tailed). Levene's test for equality of variances showed there was no significant differences between the variances of males and females. As well, ranges appeared to comparable, although males' shame values were somewhat restricted at the high end, compared to the females' values.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges of Main Variables Presented by Gender

	Male (n = 49)	Female (n = 136)
Shame-proneness		
M	42.5	46.6
SD	7.5	8.3
Range	27 - 62	26 - 69
Guilt-proneness		
M	55.6	60.8
SD	6.6	6.4
Range	34 - 69	35 - 72
Forgiveness		
M	200.8	193.5
SD	72.6	77.9
Range	10 - 286	20 - 300

Gender differences in the means for shame-proneness and guilt-proneness suggest the possibility that male and female participants did differ. This differences may be in the amount of guilt and shame that males and females either report or experience. Tangney (1990) also found this difference. Because of this difference I chose to analyze my data for each gender as well as for the overall sample.

Shame-proneness, Guilt-proneness and Forgiveness amongst All Participants

Differences between the relationships amongst variables. I hypothesized that the higher an individual's shame-proneness, the lower the tendency to forgive, whereas I expected that guilt-proneness would be unrelated to the tendency to forgive. To investigate this hypothesis, I conducted a t-test of the difference between two dependent correlations--the correlation between scores on shame-proneness and overall forgiveness scores, and the correlation between scores on guilt-proneness and overall forgiveness scores. The correlations are described as dependent because they are both taken from the same sample, the group of introductory psychology students.

The t-test showed that there was a significant difference between the correlation for shame and forgiveness and the correlation for guilt and forgiveness. These correlations produced a t-test result of t (182) = -2.69, which, as hypothesized, was significant ($p \leq .01$, two-tailed).

The relationship between shame-proneness and forgiveness. Beyond stating that the relationships between the two correlations would be

different, my hypothesis also stated that the higher an individual's shame-proneness, the lower the tendency to forgive, implying that there would be a significant negative relationship between shame-proneness and forgiveness. The correlation between shame and forgiveness, for the complete set of participants, was r (184) = -.17 (p = .025). This correlation was small but statistically significant and the relationship was in the hypothesized direction.

The relationship between guilt-proneness and forgiveness. My hypothesis stated that I expected that guilt-proneness would be unrelated to the tendency to forgive, implying a non-significant correlation between guilt-proneness and forgiveness. The correlation between guilt and forgiveness, for the complete set of participants, was r (184) = .03 (p = n.s.). Again, this result was congruent with the hypothesis.

Correlations using partialled scales. At the next step of analysis, I conducted tests using modified results from the TOSCA, following the authors' method of partialling shame from guilt and guilt from shame. The purpose of this analysis was to look at how the unique parts of shame and guilt are related to forgiveness. Because shame and guilt have a moderate correlation, this method allows a look at the portions of "shame-free guilt" and "guilt-free shame" that remain for each participant.

The correlation between "guilt-free shame" and forgiveness, for the complete set of participants, was r (184) = -.21 (p = .005). This correlation was again small, but somewhat stronger than the correlation based on

unpartialled shame. The relationship showed a strengthening in the hypothesized direction over the unpartialled scores.

The correlation between "shame-free guilt" and forgiveness, for the complete set of participants, was r (184) = .13 (p = n.s.). Again, this correlation was congruent with the hypothesis, and shows that there would not be a significant relationship between guilt-proneness and forgiveness.

Using the method of partialling the TOSCA scales provided a slight increase of the differences between the correlations. This is similar to what Tangney and her colleagues have found using this method with the TOSCA and other variables (e.g. Tangney, Wagner & Gramzow, 1992). I did not find this method provided me with a substantially different or improved perspective on the data, and so the remainder of the results were analyzed using unpartialled scores.

Shame-proneness, Guilt-proneness and Forgiveness Amongst Females

Differences between the relationships amongst variables. I expected my hypothesis to remain true for females: that the higher an individual's shame-proneness, the lower the tendency to forgive, whereas guilt-proneness would be unrelated to the tendency to forgive. To investigate this hypothesis for female participants only, I conducted another t-test of the difference between two dependent correlations--the correlation between scores on shame-proneness and overall forgiveness scores, and the correlation

between scores on guilt-proneness and overall forgiveness scores. I used the unpartialled scores of all female participants (n = 136).

The t-test showed that there was a significant difference between the correlation for shame and forgiveness and the correlation for guilt and forgiveness. These correlations produced a t-test result of t (133) = -2.74, which, as hypothesized, was significant ($p \leq .01$, two-tailed).

The relationship between shame-proneness and forgiveness for females. The result regarding shame-proneness and forgiveness for female participants was similar to the overall sample. The correlation between shame-proneness and forgiveness was r (134) = -.21 (p = .013). This correlation was somewhat stronger than for the overall sample, and again was statistically significant and in the hypothesized direction.

The relationship between guilt-proneness and forgiveness for females. The result regarding guilt-proneness and forgiveness for female participants was similar to the overall sample. The correlation between guilt-proneness and forgiveness was r (134) = .03 (p = n.s.).

Shame-proneness, Guilt-proneness and Forgiveness Amongst Males

Differences between the relationships amongst variables. I expected the same hypothesis to remain true for males: that the higher an individual's shame-proneness, the lower the tendency to forgive, whereas I expected that guilt-proneness would be unrelated to the tendency to forgive. To investigate this hypothesis for male participants only, I conducted another t-

test of the difference between two dependent correlations. I used the unpartialled scores of all male participants (n = 49).

The t-test showed that, for males, there was not a significant difference between the correlation for shame and forgiveness and the correlation for guilt and forgiveness. The correlations produced a t-test result of t (46) = -0.65.

The relationship between shame-proneness and forgiveness for males. The result regarding shame-proneness and forgiveness for male participants was unlike results for the overall sample and for females. The correlation between shame-proneness and forgiveness was r (47) = .02 (p = n.s.). This correlation showed that for male participants, shame-proneness and forgiveness were unrelated.

The relationship between guilt-proneness and forgiveness for males. The result regarding guilt-proneness and forgiveness for male participants was similar to the results for overall sample and for female participants. The correlation between guilt-proneness and forgiveness was r (47) = .12 (p = n.s.), showing that the two variables were unrelated.

Summary of Male-Female Differences

To illustrate the unexpected differences between male and female participants, I created a table showing the correlations between shame-proneness and forgiveness, and guilt-proneness and forgiveness for each gender (see Table 2). These correlations indicate that only the relationship

between shame-proneness and forgiveness for the females was significant in this study. This shows that in this study, not only were male and female means different regarding guilt-proneness and shame-proneness (as discussed earlier), but gender also affected the relationships between shame-proneness and forgiveness. Female participants showed that those who are more shame-prone also exhibit less forgiveness, but male participants showed no indication of a relationship between shame-proneness and forgiveness. Because female participants comprised 74% of the sample, they had a large impact on the overall results. Thus the separate results for each gender are likely the more accurate way to portray the relationships amongst the three variables.

Finally, I tested to see if the male and female correlations were significantly different. I used tests of the differences between two independent correlations. As one might expect comparing the male and female values, there was no significant difference between the correlations for guilt-proneness and forgiveness. For the correlations between shame-proneness and forgiveness, there was also no significant difference between the correlations for male and female participants.

Table 2

Correlations Between Shame, Guilt, and Forgiveness Presented by Gender

	Male (n = 49)	Female (n = 136)
Shame-proneness and forgiveness	.02	-.21*
Guilt-proneness and forgiveness	.12	.03

*$p \leq .01$

Chapter V

Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an interpretation of the results, an evaluation of the limitations of the research, a discussion of how the results fit with the literature, and an examination of implications of this study.

Interpretation of the Results

Relationships amongst shame, guilt, and forgiveness. The data from this study weakly supported my hypothesis. The data showed that there was a negative relationship between shame-proneness and forgiveness, and no relationship between guilt-proneness and forgiveness. Statistically, these two correlations were significantly different from each other. However, the correlations were not strong, and gained statistical significance in part because of the size of the sample. Therefore, the results of this study should be interpreted with caution. They are possibly indicative of support for the hypothesis, but in need of further replication and refinement.

The role of gender. The data indicated that gender likely does play a role in the relationships amongst shame-proneness, guilt-proneness, and forgiveness. Analysis showed that scored that males reported had means significantly lower than those for females for shame and guilt, a finding which was similar to previous research using the TOSCA. As well, the relationship between shame-proneness and forgiveness was significant for

females but not males. The t-test of the differences between shame-proneness and forgiveness as opposed to guilt-proneness and forgiveness was significant for females but not for males. Thus males report less shame- and guilt-proneness, and their shame-proneness does not affect the level of forgiveness that they exhibit, whereas for females, shame-proneness does relate to less forgiveness.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the forgiveness measure. The EFI asks respondents to think of one situation in which they were hurt deeply and unfairly. Thus any correlation between shame-proneness or guilt-proneness to forgiveness is based on respondents' forgiveness in only one instance. This may have contributed to the weakness of the relationships I found. A more accurate correlation would result from a questionnaire that asked about participants' typical patterns of forgiveness, over a period of time. This sort of questionnaire would provide more of a trait measure, which may be more reflective of participants' tendency to forgive than their responses to the particular situation they reported on the EFI.

Causal relationships cannot be implied. The negative correlation between shame-proneness and forgiveness indicates only that these two constructs vary together. The question remains as to whether shame-proneness causes unforgiveness, unforgiveness causes shame-proneness, or whether both shame-proneness and unforgiveness are both due to other

factors. A direct causal connection has not been established by this research. The theoretical position of this investigation tends toward saying that shame-proneness causes difficulties in forgiving others, and that to address unforgiveness, the issue of shame needs to be recognized. Further research is needed to establish this point.

Limited generalizability. Only university students were studied because of the preliminary nature of this investigation. Because of this, the findings are limited to this group. It is possible that relationships between shame, guilt, and forgiveness change as people mature, just as previous research indicates that attitudes towards forgiveness become more positive with age (DiBlasio & Benda, 1991). A study including older adults would provide insight into this possibility.

Results Considered in Context of Previous Research

Shame. Once again, shame has been singled out as a possible "cause of emotional distress" (Karen, 1992, p. 40), further implicating it as damaging when occurring in excess, as it has come to be viewed by both research and clinical psychologists. This study follows the current trend of blaming shame, this time for creating forgiveness problems for women, although as mentioned above, no cause-and-effect conclusions can be drawn.

This study does not sort out the issue of whether shame is intrapersonal or interpersonal. We see that shame possibly does have an effect on interpersonal relationships--more shame means less forgiveness,

which likely leads to conflictual, disrupted and severed relationships. However, this does not prove that shame itself is an interpersonal phenomenon. In fact, this study is set up to view shame as an intrapersonal phenomenon--as an internal, personality characteristic on which people vary, which has an effect on interpersonal functioning.

Psychodynamic theory fits with the idea that shame and forgiveness have a relationship. In shame, self-judgment occurs because of a failure to meet the high standards of the ego-ideal (Piers & Singer, 1971). We see harsh criticism of the superego (Lewis, 1971) and anxiety about rejection (Levin, 1967) turned against the self, leading to self-condemnation and the desire to hide. Looking at unforgiveness, it seems possible that the same unconscious harshness and rejection is turned against others. The way the superego blames the self may be the way it treats others too, and the self may know no other way to understand and deal with failure or wrong-doing. Shame, from the psychodynamic perspective, can be seen as a lack of self forgiveness. One way to look at the results of my study is to say that it showed that not forgiving one's self seemed to correlate with not forgiving others.

From a non-psychodynamic perspective, Nathanson (1994) points out four typical responses to shame. These were withdrawal, avoidance, self-attack, and the attack of others. These responses occur when shame is actively experienced. My study was not looking at how people respond when

they are actively experiencing shame or guilt. Rather, it looked at forgiveness occurring at any time, and how this may be affected by patterns of shame or guilt. From Nathanson's theory, though, we could generalize that if a person is shame-prone and experiences shame frequently in their daily life, they may also be prone to withdraw, avoid others, and attack others. Withdrawing, avoiding and attacking are all incompatible with forgiving others and healing relationships.

The same may be said for a pattern of angry responses to others. Tangney, Wagner, Fletcher and Gramzow (1992) found support for the relationship between anger and shame. Anger, suspiciousness, resentment and irritability are all related to levels of shame, and may be a factor in the relationship between shame and unforgiveness.

Guilt. The results of my study point to viewing guilt and forgiveness as unique, separate constructs that do not have an impact on each other, either for males or females. As I discussed earlier, the reason shame relates to forgiveness is that shame has an impact on self-evaluation. Guilt, in contrast, is considered to have an impact on the evaluation of one's behaviors (Tangney, 1990), especially behaviors that damage relationships that an individual values (Brooke, 1985). Harsh evaluation of the self is not involved. Therefore, whether one has little guilt--rarely examining behavior and feeling little need to make amends--or much guilt, the basic approval and worth of the self is intact. So the person with little guilt (and little shame)

may be willing and able to forgive others, just as the person who feels a serious responsibility and much guilt (but still little shame) is able to forgive.

Shame and guilt. My study supports the necessity of continuing to draw a distinction between guilt and shame. Once again, guilt and shame have shown unique patterns of relationships to a third variable.

My study points to the possibility that there are gender differences in relationship of shame-proneness and guilt-proneness to a third variable. This finding was unexpected, given that I did not find a precedent for gender differences of this sort in the literature. Also, I found that the correlations for males and for females were not actually significantly different from eachother. Further research would be advisable to determine whether differences can be found consistently, or whether my findings were due to characteristics of my particular sample. Currently, I lean towards thinking of this result as an anomaly, rather than trying to generate a theoretical explanation for it. From my current understanding, there is no reason why shame would have a different relationship to forgiveness in males than females. Perhaps a qualitative study would be able to illuminate some subtle differences that could then be incorporated into future studies.

Shame, guilt, and forgiveness. Fisher (1985) theorized that shame and forgiveness do not easily co-exist based on his clinical work with borderline patients. These individuals did not seem to have forgiveness in their repertoire, and found it difficult to learn. The results of this study extend

Fisher's ideas to the general population. Shame-proneness and guilt-proneness each exist on a continuum, and although few people may experience shame to the degree of a borderline patient, many people may experience more shame than is helpful to them. My study points to the possibility that this may be the case, and that, as with borderline patients, forgiveness becomes more unlikely the more an individual is prone to shame.

Implications and Future Directions

The benefit of qualitative inquiry.

The questionnaires on shame, guilt, and forgiveness are limited in their ability to discern the complexity of the relationships between these constructs. Qualitative inquiry has not been conducted on the relationships between shame, guilt, and forgiveness in the general population. Fisher's (1985) paper on shame, guilt, and forgiveness amongst people with borderline personality disorder was based on theory and clinical observation. An in-depth qualitative inquiry on attitudes towards and experiences with forgiveness, utilizing men and women with a variety of levels of shame-proneness and guilt-proneness, could provide direction for future research on this topic. An inquiry of this type could indicate whether the results of this study were under or overrepresenting the relationship between shame and forgiveness. As well, qualitative research can provide a basis for generating further theory--theory which is well grounded on individuals' experience of the phenomena and not on speculation or observation.

Implications for counselling practice. Conducting this study has provided me with greater insight in working with clients on shame, guilt and forgiveness. It has made me aware of how commonly shame is an issue in counselling, and how important it is to name and address it. As Nathanson (1989) pointed out, shame is a central theme where abuse has occurred. H. B. Lewis (1971) also brought to my awareness how the very nature of therapy can be shame-inducing.

I have come to see some guilt as a healthy sign of interpersonal awareness. Rather than soothing guilt away, it may be better to help clients recognize and address guilt feelings. While helping a client move away from feelings of shame, appropriate guilt can be supported, and practical solutions can be generated to make amends where they are needed. I thought of shame and guilt in hearing about the personal pain of Vietnam veterans who were involved in the slaughter of civilian villagers. Some were overcome by the shame of the experience and went on to commit suicide, while others were making an effort to seek forgiveness, to make amends in active ways, and to move on with their lives.

In helping bring about forgiveness, whether in disintegrating marriages or with individuals who are dealing with past hurts, the presence of shame needs to be assessed and addressed. I believe that forgiveness of others will be most successful when a person can separate his or her own behavior from his or her sense of self. When people can allow the kindness, peacefulness

and lovingness of forgiveness to themselves, they will be ready to extend it to those around them.

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Appendix A

Demographic Questionnaire

Please answer each of the following questions as carefully and honestly as possible. Please ensure that you answer all of the questions in the packet.

The information that you provide will be kept in strictest confidence and will only be accessible to the researcher and supervisor.

1. What is your present age? _____ years

2. What is your gender? _____ male _____ female

3. What is your education level?

___ first year undergraduate
___ second year undergraduate
___ third year undergraduate
___ fourth year undergraduate
___ more than fourth year
___ unclassified student
___ graduate student

Appendix B

TOSCA

Below are situations that people are likely to encounter in day-to-day life, followed by several common reactions to those situations.

As you read each scenario, try to imagine yourself in that situation. Then indicate how likely you would be to react in each of the ways described. We ask you to rate all responses because people may feel or react more than one way to the same situation, or they may react different ways at different times.

For example:

A. You wake up early one Saturday morning. It is cold and rainy outside.

a) You would telephone a friend to catch up on the news. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

b) You would take the extra time to read the paper. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

c) You would feel disappointed that it's raining. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

d) You would wonder why you woke up so early. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

In the above example, I've rated ALL of the answers by circling a number. I circled a "1" for answer (a) because I wouldn't want to wake up a friend very early on a Saturday morning --- so it's not at all likely that I would do that. I circled a "5" for answer (b) because I almost always read the paper if I have time in the morning (very likely). I circled a "3" for answer (c) because for me it's about half and half. Sometimes I would be disappointed about the rain and sometimes I wouldn't --- it would depend on what I had planned. And I circled a "4" for answer (d) because I would probably wonder why I had awakened so early.

Please do not skip any items --- rate all responses.

1. You make plans to meet a friend for lunch. At 5 o'clock, you realize you stood him up.

   a) You would think: "I'm inconsiderate." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   b) You would think: "Well, they'll understand." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   c) You would try to make it up to him as soon as possible 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   d) You would think: "My boss distracted me just before lunch." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

2. You break something at work and then hide it.

   a) You would think: "This is making me anxious. I need to either fix it or get someone else to." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   b) You would think about quitting. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   c) You would think: "A lot of things aren't made very well these days." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   d) You would think: "It was only an accident." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

3. You are out with friends one evening, and you're feeling especially witty and attractive. Your best friend's spouse seems particularly to enjoy your company.

   a) You would think: "I should have been aware of what my best friend is feeling." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   b) You would feel happy with your appearance and personality. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   c) You would feel pleased to have made such a good impression. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   d) You would think your best friend should pay attention to his/her spouse. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   e) You would probably avoid eye contact for a long time. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

4. At work, you wait until the last minute to plan a project, and it turns out badly.

   a) You would feel incompetent. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   b) You would think: "There are never enough hours in the day." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   c) You would feel: "I deserve to be reprimanded." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   d) You would think: "What's done is done." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

5. You make a mistake at work and find out a co-worker is blamed for the error.

   a) You would think the company did not like the co-worker 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   b) You would think: "Life's not fair." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   c) You would keep quiet and avoid the co-worker. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   d) You would feel unhappy and eager to correct the situation. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

6. For several days you put off making a difficult phone call. At the last minute you make the call and are able to manipulate the conversation so that all goes well.

   a) You would think: "I guess I'm more persuasive than I thought." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   b) You would regret that you put it off. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   c) You would feel like a coward. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   d) You would think: "I did a good job." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

   e) You would think you shouldn't have to make calls you feel pressured into. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

7. You make a commitment to diet, but when you pass the bakery you buy a dozen donuts.

   a) Next meal, you would eat celery to make up for it. 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

   b) You would think: "They looked too good to pass up." 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

   c) You would feel disgusted with your lack of will power and self-control. 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

   d) You would think: "Once won't matter." 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

8. While playing around, you throw a ball and it hits you friend in the face.

   a) You would feel inadequate that you can't even throw a ball. 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

   b) You would think maybe your friend needs more practice at catching. 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

   c) You would think: "It was just an accident." 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

   d) You would apologize and make sure your friend feels better. 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

9. You have recently moved away from your family, and everyone has been very helpful. A few times you needed to borrow money, but you paid it back as soon as you could.

   a) You would feel immature. 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

   b) You would think: "I sure ran into some bad luck." 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

   c) You would return the favor as quickly as you could. 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

   d) You would think: "I am a trustworthy person." 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

   e) You would be proud that you repaid your debts. 1--2--3--4--5 (not likely very likely)

10. You are driving down the road, and you hit a small animal.

a) You would think the animal shouldn't have been on the road. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

b) You would think: "I'm terrible." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

c) You would feel: "Well, it was an accident." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

d) You would probably think it over several times wondering if you could have avoided it. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

11. You walk out of an exam thinking you did extremely well. Then you find out you did poorly.

a) You would think: "Well, it's just a test." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

b) You would think: "The instructor doesn't like me." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

c) You would think: "I should have studied harder." 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

d) You would feel stupid. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

12. You and a group of co-workers worked very hard on a project. Your boss singles you out for a bonus because the project was such a success.

a) You would feel the boss is rather short-sighted. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

b) You would feel alone and apart from your colleagues. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

c) You would feel your hard work had paid off. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

d) You would feel competent and proud of yourself. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

e) You would feel you should not accept it. 1--2--3--4--5 not likely very likely

13. While out with a group of friends, you make fun of a friend who's not there.

a) You would think: "It was all in fun; it's harmless." 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

b) You would feel small...like a rat. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

c) You would think that perhaps that friend should have been there to defend himself/herself. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

d) You would apologize and talk about that person's good points. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

14. You make a big mistake on an important project at work. People were depending on you, and your boss criticizes you.

a) You would think your boss should have been more clear about what was expected of you. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

b) You would feel like you wanted to hide. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

c) You would think: "I should have recognized the problem and done a better job." 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

d) You would think: "Well, nobody's perfect." 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

15. You volunteer to help with the local Special Olympics for handicapped children. It turns out to be frustrating and time-consuming work. You think seriously about quitting, but then you see how happy the kids are.

a) You would feel selfish and you'd think you are basically lazy. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

b) You would feel you were forced into doing something you did not want to do. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

c) You would think: "I should be more concerned about people who are less fortunate." 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

d) You would feel great that you had helped others. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

e) You would feel very satisfied with yourself. 1--2--3--4--5
not likely very likely

Appendix C

KEEP THIS SHEET ONLY

Dear Research Participant:

You have been asked to participate in a research study that examines the relationships amongst some aspects of your personal and social style. Your participation will provide important information about patterns people follow in these areas. The full nature of the inquiry will be discussed after you have completed the questionnaires.

As a participant in this research, you will be requested to complete three self-report surveys: (a) a demographic questionnaire, which gathers information such as your age, gender, education level; (b) a survey about how you might respond to a series of situations that you may encounter in day-to-day life; and (c) a survey that asks you about to describe a situation where you were hurt deeply and unfairly, and that asks you to answer some questions about your feelings, behaviours and thoughts about that situation now. Although there is no set time limit, the questionnaires will likely take about a half an hour to complete.

Please be assured that your anonymity and confidentiality will be protected. The surveys will be identified by a code number. If you wish to receive the results of the study by mail, you will be asked to write your name and address on a sheet at the front of the class. No personal information will be included in any report of this study. Only general findings will be presented. The results will be used towards a master's thesis, and possibly an article in a psychological journal.

You may find that some of the survey questions seem rather personal in nature. You have the right to leave out any questions that you do not wish to answer, or to not participate. Further, you may withdraw your responses at a later date by contacting myself or my supervisor. However, remember that the surveys are anonymous, and all answers will be kept in strictest confidence.

This research is being supervised by Dr. Robert Frender, a professor in the Department of Educational Psychology. If you have any concerns about this research and/or your rights as a research participant, please contact Dr. Frender at 492-1160, or write to either of us at the Department of Educational Psychology, 6-102 Education North, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, T6B 2G5.

Sincerely,
Tamara Schuld
M.Ed. student, Department of Educational Psychology

Your code number: _____

Appendix D

HAND THIS SHEET IN SEPARATELY

Consent Form

I have heard and understood the conditions and requirements of research participation for this study. I am aware that:

My anonymity and confidentiality will be protected by the researcher conducting the study.

I have the right to withdraw my consent at any time during the study without penalty.

There will be no report of any personal information that I provide, but only general statements about the whole group will be reported.

When I complete the study, I will receive a full description of the goals of the research.

Name (please print):

_____

Signature:

_____

Date:

_____

Appendix E

Debriefing - TAM04

Thank you for your participation in this project. In this study, we're interested in the relationships amongst 3 variables - shame, guilt, and the forgiveness of others. In this type of research, we do not manipulate variables, but instead measure existing characteristics that people have. We look at PREDICTOR variables and CRITERION variables. In this study, two predictors, levels of shame-proneness and guilt-proneness are compared regarding their relationships to the criterion variable, forgiveness of others. This type of research is correlational in nature. Because I did not manipulate any variables, I cannot make any cause and effect inferences. That is, I couldn't say that being prone to shame causes people to be unforgiving because I did not manipulate people's level of shame and then observe its effect on their forgiveness. There are possibly variables that could provide an alternative explanation about the relationship between shame-proneness and forgiveness, and guilt-proneness and forgiveness.

A type of study which can assess how variables cause changes in other variables is called an experimental design. If I wanted to show that shame causes unforgiveness, I would have to use an experimental design. In this experiment, my independent variables, the one I manipulate, would be shame and guilt. I would have to cause some people to experience a lot of shame, some to experience a little, and some to experience none; as well, I would cause some people to experience a lot of guilt, some to experience a little, and some to experience none. Then I would have to measure the effect these different levels of the independent variables had on my dependent variable, forgiveness. This design would allow me to show direct causal relationships between my two independent and one dependent variables. However, as you might imagine, this sort of design would be a lot more involved. It would be difficult to show that I had actually caused people to experience shame or guilt, and it would also bring up some ethical concerns about how this might affect my participants. As well, I am interested in people's typical experience of shame and guilt over time, not just in their current emotional state.

Another aspect of this study that would be different in an experimental design is random assignment. In my study, everyone received the same questionnaires. However, with random assignment to conditions, each of you would have an equal probability of receiving any of the levels of the independent variables. Because of random assignment, we can know that the different groups of people who receive the various levels of the independent variables are about the same before our manipulations; that is, all groups contain tall people and short people, smart people and not so smart people, people who have had a lot of coffee and people who haven't had much coffee, etc. -- so height, intelligence, and amount of coffee cannot be what causes any differences on our dependent variable, so our independent variable has to be the cause of any change that we find in our dependent variable. So, if the groups are the same before our manipulations, then any

differences that we find on our dependent variables must be due to our independent variables causing some effect. With my correlational design, I have to take into account the possibility that, for instance, all the people who are very shame-prone may also have missed their morning coffee, or may all be depressed, which may be the real cause of their responses. I do not control who is high or low on shame or guilt.

Previous research regarding shame and guilt has shown them to be quite different emotions. Shame has been defined as an emotion that involves a negative evaluation of the self. In a situation where a failure has occurred, a person might want to hide, feel inadequate, or criticize him or herself. The person thinks "I am bad". Guilt, in contrast, is defined as an emotion that involves a negative evaluation of a specific action. In a situation where a failure has occurred, a person might look for ways to make up for the failure, or do better next time. The person thinks "I did a bad thing". Guilt and shame have been shown to have different correlations with empathy, and with various sorts of psychopathology.

My criterion variable, forgiveness, is defined as a change in feelings, thoughts and actions towards someone who has hurt you deeply and unfairly. It involves acknowledging that the incident was hurtful, and yet letting go of negative feelings, thoughts, and actions and replacing them with positive feelings, thoughts, and actions. Forgiveness of others is often a goal in therapy, and as counsellors, we look for ways to facilitate this process. Understanding the relationships of shame and guilt to forgiveness is important for this reason. I hypothesize that people who are prone to shame are less likely to have forgiven someone who has hurt them than people who are not as prone to shame. As well, I hypothesize that people who are prone to guilt are just as likely to have forgiven someone who has hurt them as people who are not prone to guilt.

Part of the scientific process involves building on previous research in order to attempt to clarify issues and lead to new discoveries. In my present work, I am building on other work by Dr. June Tangney of George Mason University, who is a leading researcher of shame, guilt, and other self-conscious emotions. The findings of my work may further validate her findings about the differences between shame and guilt. As well, my work will further research in the area of forgiveness, where the differences between shame and guilt and their relationships to forgiveness have not been explored. The findings of the present study should lead to modifications of theory and other testable hypotheses which, in turn, should lead to other hypotheses, and so on. This is how science builds on previous work and is known as the functional approach to theory development. We often identify issues raised in journals, point out problems, extend the issues, or modify theories in order to advance our understanding.

As you can see, it is very important to have people participate in our research so that the scientific endeavor of understanding complex human phenomena can progress. Hopefully, your participation not only helps to

advance our understanding of psychology, but leads you to understand how we go about conducting research.

One of the last things I want to discuss with you is why, in the beginning, I didn't explain exactly what my hypotheses were. I guess you can see if I told you that we were studying how shame and guilt are related to forgiveness, you might have felt a lot of pressure or demand to react one way or the other. You might have felt pressured to react in the way you thought we expected you to on the basis of our theory rather than reacting the way you normally would. The possibility that some participants might react the way experimenters expect is called the DEMAND AWARENESS EFFECT. This can be a problem in research because our results could reflect nothing having to do with the psychological processes that we're interested in studying, but could simply reflect demand awareness. If this was the case, scientific progress would be slowed and inappropriate avenues of research could be followed. So, I hope you can see how having people know hypotheses in advance of responding would lead to problems in the interpretation of the data.

Thanks very much for participating. Without the help of people like you, we couldn't answer most questions that we have in psychology. You've been a great help.